

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) ~~The use of articles~~
An article formed ~~of~~ from a water-absorbent open-celled crosslinked acid-functional addition polymer ~~foams~~ foam and containing finely divided silicon dioxide ~~and/or,~~ at least one surfactant, or both on ~~their~~ a surface as ~~an~~ of the article for acquisition ~~and/or distribution~~ layer, ~~in hygiene articles.~~

2. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 1, wherein said surface of said formed ~~articles~~ article has been subjected to a post-crosslinking operation by application of at least one crosslinker and heating to ~~temperatures~~ a temperature at which said crosslinker reacts with said ~~polymers~~ polymer.

3. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
The article of claim 1 ~~or 2,~~ wherein said formed ~~articles are sheets, webs, films, strands or granules~~ article is a sheet, web, film, strand, or granule.

4. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~
~~any~~ The article of ~~claims~~ claim 1 to 3, wherein said finely divided ~~silicone~~ silicon dioxide has an average particle size of from 5 to 50 μm and a BET surface area of at least 100 m^2/g .

5. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any~~ The article of claims claim 1 to 4, wherein the amount of silicon dioxide and/or surfactant on said surface of said formed ~~articles~~ article is in the range from 0.01 to 5% by weight, based on the weight of the hydrogel foam.

6. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any~~ The article of claims claim 1 to 5, wherein said formed ~~articles are webs or films~~ article is a web or film from 0.5 to 10 mm in thickness.

7. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in~~ The article of claim 6, wherein, in the ~~hygiene~~ article, only ~~the a~~ a bodyfacing side of said ~~webs or films~~ web or film has been surface postcrosslinked and treated with the silicon dioxide and/or a the surfactant.

8. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any~~ The article of claims claim 1 to 7, wherein the predominantly open-celled hydrogel ~~foams comprise~~ foam comprises a crosslinked polymers polymer of acrylic acid.

9. (Currently amended) ~~A use as claimed in any~~ The article of claims 1 to 8, claim 10 wherein said hygiene ~~articles are~~ article is selected from the group consisting of infant diapers, incontinence products, femcare articles, wound contact materials, ~~or~~ and secondary wound dressings.

10. (New) The article of claim 1 wherein the article is an acquisition layer or a distribution layer in a hygiene article.